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ABSTRACT

The origins and development of one specific faculty development program are described with additional consideration given to problems encountered. The emergence of the overall faculty development issue is reviewed as well as the experiences of individual faculty members at East Texas State University. Workshops led to plans for: appointment of a faculty development coordinator; initiation of an extensive orientation program for new personnel; an in-service program; and evaluation, consultation, and informational services. (LBH)

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DEVELOPING A FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM: THE CASE OF EAST TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

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A paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southwestern Sociological Association, April 1, 1977, Dallas, Texas.

Developing a Faculty Development Program: The Case of East Texas State University*

Introduction

In a special report on faculty development, the editors of Change Magazine begin by noting a paradox surrounding the teaching profession.

> There is a curious thing about teaching: it is at once the most central business in the college world, and yet it is the least talked about. Grumbled about, yes. But one rarely hears an intelligent discussion of it.

This observation certainly seems intuitively correct. Anyone who has ever taught has not only heard the grumblings, but most likely made some of the noise himself. And too, it seems that teaching is a lot like the weather. Critics and would-be reformers have tended to be long on talk, long on posturing, but short on action. Who can really change such things, it is argued.

But in the context of this demonstrated inertia, some colleges and universities around the country have begun to make significant commitments, to address the "grumblings", to treat the teaching-learning process and its actors as important elements in the round of activity called the University. These commitments of various sorts have come to be known as projects of faculty development. They have

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* I wish to acknowledge the helpful comments of Lawrence Clinton in the preparation of this paper

in common the general goal of positively impacting the teaching-learning environment by attempting to cultivate and renew the resources of the faculty, while at the same time enervating and amplifying faculty members as important resources in themselves. At first glance it would seem that faculty development isn't all that new. After all most universities subscribe to the improvement of their staff. But faculty development as it emerged during the late 1960's and early 1970's looked and sounded different. There was somehow more seriousness this trip, and with good reason.

The central aim of this paper is to describe the origins and development of one specific faculty development program with additional consideration given to problems and pitfalls encountered. Before beginning with the narrative of this program's development, however, some consideration must be given to a question which is begged in the preceding discussion. Specifically it is useful to reflect on the emergence of this "new" interest in teaching by those who teach. Most succinctly it may be asked, "Why faculty development now?"

The Emergence of Faculty Development

It doesn't seem to matter much which source you consult for commentary concerning the emergence of faculty development programs. They all touch upon the same set of circumstances and the same developments (cf. Astin et. al. 1974; Bergquist

and Phillips, 1975; Centra, 1976). One frequently suggested cause for the recent emergence of faculty development is the growing demand for accountability.

> Students are less timid about expressing their dissatisfaction....and many parents are not at all sure that instruction is as effective as the high costs of a college education suggest it should be (Centra, 1976:2; cf. Eble, 1971; Eble, 1974).

Faculty development programs may represent an attempt by educators to respond to pressures by their clients (students) and the general public (legislators and pressure groups) to do a better job. Declining enrollments have led to a very real competition for available students, which has, among other things, resensitized faculty to the need to "do well". But declining enrollments have had more far-reaching implications. With declining enrollments come tighter, more competitive job markets in academia, which in effect have led to greatly reduced job mobility among faculty. A common pattern found across the country is the university with a rising mean age among faculty coupled with an increasing percentage of tenured faculty.

As faculties grow older and less transient, the possibilities for stagnation would seem to increase. In the past universities have operated on the assumption that new faculty bring an influx of fresh ideas and energy. But with decreasing turnover we find a model which emphasizes the need to fit in and simply survive until a tenure decision. New faculty

unsure of their future and anxious to keep their jobs, seem unlikely to force reassessment of existing patterns and opportunities. Given the low power potential of incoming faculty, plus the relatively high risk involved in changing structures and process, it seems doubtful that new faculty have ever had much of a diffused impact on the university. Changing patterns of faculty mobility therefore lead universities to generate their own source of change and renewal in the form of faculty development projects.

Realizing the need to develop existing resources as fully as possible, universities have instituted formalized, multifaceted programs to renew their faculty and keep them vital. The remainder of this paper is devoted to the case history of a Faculty Development program only now in its infancy. Barely one academic year old, the program is described from its origination to its projections for the coming year. Generally, academicians are turned-off by "cook book" approaches. But in this case a little bit of "cook book" seems warranted. First, because faculty development is still relatively new, many who might be interested are simply unaware of what such programs can look like. But most importantly, because such programs are relatively new, they sometimes seem esoteric, so that although an individual may know where he would like to be, he has little idea of how to actually get there. It is hoped that this

narrative will provide encouragement and direction. Finally before beginning it must be emphasized that this is only a case study. It is a description of how one program began, what it looks like, and where it seems headed. No expertise is claimed.

Faculty Development at East Texas State University

Faculty development at East Texas should probably trace at least some of its beginning to an announcement which was made at the general business session of last year's Southwestern Sociological Association meeting. It was at this session that Dr. Ethelyn Davis announced a regional workshop on teacher development sponsored by the American Sociological Association. With my own curiosity more than a little aroused, I applied to be a workshop participant, along with two other colleagues. Our applications were accepted and we were initiated into the mysteries of teacher development. The impact of the workshop was felt not only in a motivation to challenge our colleagues to grow, but also in much of the structure and shape which our challenge would ultimately take. We left the workshop feeling intellectually refreshed and invigorated. Indeed, the feelings of rededication led two of us to make a contract to "do something" for own whole department. The "high" from the workshop was too good to monopolize. Our intentions good, we nonetheless anticipated

the fall semester with only vague ideas of what we would plan for our department. Due largely to the energies of my colleague, our personal contract led to a successful three day workshop for the other departmental faculty and teaching assistants prior to the start of the Fall 1976 semester (See Appendix A). New developmental wheels were turning in at least one department on campus, and the motivation and model for the program were clearly traceable to the regional workshop of the summer. The involvement of two sociologists in that summer workshop was to have a demonstrable effect on the university-wide program which had yet to emerge.

The fall semester began with the modest success in the sociology department, but as we were to discover, another small group had been "turned on" to faculty development independent of our efforts. This group was composed of some individuals who, though still young enough, had been around for awhile and moreover, realized they would probably be around East Texas State a good bit longer. They had loosely resolved to make the best of it and thought that improving themselves and their colleagues would be a project worth pursuing. The emergence of this group was a key event in the birth of a campus-wide faculty development program. It was this group which was able to gain official university support for developmental activity. Recent changes in administrative leadership created a situation ripe for something new and

different. Faculty development, vague and undefined in its goals and methods, was new and different.

Defining the Program: Following Intuition

The small group working independent of our efforts in the sociology department first went public just after the start of the fall semester of this past year. In an attempt to build a base of support and establish some general direction, the group designed and circulated among the faculty a questionnaire which tapped attitudes toward teaching, specific teaching activities, and change. Initial impressions from the survey indicated that there was at least ample support to proceed further. A subsequent survey by the Faculty Senate showed that among a list of eight areas of potential growth and development for the university, the need for a faculty development program was ranked only behind the need to improve the quality of existing academic programs. It was at this point in time that the small group took on several new members, including my colleague and myself.

Perhaps as much as anything else it was the lack of expertise among the planning committee which allowed the East Texas program to enjoy great early success. Unencombered by notions of professionals in the field, we thought instead about what we might like to improve and the kinds of exercises that would have wide appeal. We consulted the works of

experts in the field, to be sure, but significantly, the experts were not among us. W e have since learned (somewhat ironically from two professional development types) that a major cause of failure among new programs derives from an undue concern with posturing rather than doing what occurs to be useful. In discussing how to get started in faculty development Bergquist and Phillips (1975) suggest

> ...effective faculty development program(s) must contain components that have immediate face validity, that is, have specifically to do with the primary function of the faculty member, instructor in the classroom (Bergquist and Phillips, 1975:184).

Realizing that the process of faculty development was more comprehensive, we nonetheless intuitively grasped it as a matter of becoming a better classroom performer. Our initial efforts would be devoted to instructional development (i.e., changing the teaching process). It was a key decision.

The Workshop

In slightly over one month the weekly meetings of the steering committee produced plans for a three day off-campus workshop to be held at an executive retreat. The program would involve approximately 50 participants representing all academic departments and phases of the university community. The workshop was in structure and content similar to the A.S.A. sponsored workshop which I had attended (See Appendix B.)

We planned seven separate sessions over the three day period and relied almost exclusively upon resources within the university.

In brief, the program was a tremendous success in several respects. First, some real renewal and motivation actually occurred. Second, learning actually occurred. And finally, faculty morale soared. Our success, however, created some immediate problems, primarily because the development workshop was seen by some non-participants as little more than a junket. Our task was clearly to enlarge the circle of participants, to reach out to more people. We moved in that direction with the post-workshop followup. Participants in the first workshop were asked to bring a guest from the university community to the followup session. The session was to consist of a review of the first workshop plus a number of separate seminar presentations of topical interest. This workshop followup proved to be useful in two respects. First it effectively expanded the base of involvement among the faculty. New people were brought in and linked with the program. Secondly, there was a sense of rededication among the original workshop participants, a renewal of solidarity.

In the face of a second success, there was a general feeling among the steering committee that we had run out of things to do already. But before the semester was over we had helped sponsor the visit of a noted author and expert on

teaching effectiveness. Additionally we had planned a mini-workshop consisting of 15 separate presentations which replaced the faculty meeting usually held at the beginning of the Spring Semester. (See Appendix C). The workshop was so favorably received that plans have been made to begin every Spring with a similar program.

Taking Stock: Projections for the East Texas Program

Four rather successful programs in one semester seem to have firmly established the viability of a faculty development program at East Texas. Even members of the steering committee were impressed with the reception of their ideas. But they were also aware that they were susceptible to killing a good thing if they proceeded further without some very careful planning. At the committee's first meeting of the Spring Semester, it was decided to spend the remainder of the school year planning a much expanded faculty development program. The university administration expressed continued support in the broadest sense and an executive committee has roughed out a proposal for next year's activity, which includes the following key provisions.

1. Appointment of a Faculty Development Coordinator

Having made a substantial commitment to organized development activity on a university level, we have also come to understand that such programs do not run themselves. Moreover, such

programs cannot rely indefinitely upon ad hoc structures for coordination and planning if for no other reason than the tremendous burden such practice places upon already overburdened faculty. The steering committee recommends the establishment of a Faculty Development Center and the appointment of a Faculty Development Director to work approximately halftime at this position. The coordinator would receive appropriate load reduction in teaching and would be further supported by an assistant director, perhaps in the person of a graduate assistant. In general the duties of the director would include planning and coordination. The provision for such a position is seen as a key to the implimentation of a broadened program.

2. Initiation of Extensive Orientation Program for New Personnel. The university, like other complex organizations, is characterized by an extensive division of labor. The challenge of a new job in a new location, among new people is often confounded by the difficulty of learning the structure. The steering committee recommends a preservice education program for all new administrators and faculty, including parttime and teaching assistants. The purpose of the orientation program will be to introduce existing support programs and services of the university which staff may avail themselves.

3. In-Service Program. The steering committee recommends the continuation of several previously initiated in-service opportunities and the institution of one new in-service program. The major activities to be continued during the coming year include (A) an off campus fall workshop which would involve at least half of all new staff members; (B) an all campus workshop to commence the spring semester; and (C) the periodic presentation of topical seminars related to instructional improvement. The new concept to be initiated as part of the in-service program is the notion of the faculty support group. These groups will consist of up to six faculty members who make a commitment to the mutual self improvement of their faculty role through whatever means is agreeable to the group.

4. Evaluation, Consultation and Informational Services. At the least, the Faculty Development Center seeks to establish itself as a clearinghouse for needed services, including instructional evaluation, consultation of faculty and the dissemination of news and resources regarding instructional development. The latter service may be facilitated by the establishment of a newsletter and a faculty resource room containing relevant books and periodicals.

The suggestions of the steering committee are contained in a report to the academic vice president. The committee

anticipates approval and the initiation of a broader program for the coming academic year.

What We Have Learned: Some Tentative Conclusions

It seems somewhat presumptuous for us to espouse great wisdom in the infancy of our program development. Moreover, not withstanding our present enthusiasm, we can take little comfort in the fact that most faculty development programs start fast and "burn-out" within a three year period. Yet despite our limited experience we feel we have learned something which may be useful to recount. It occurs in retrospect that an important aspect of faculty development at East Texas State lies in the fact that the program was conceived, initiated and implemented by the faculty of the university. Faculty development can sometimes be something that is done to the faculty, rather than something by or with the faculty. By the same token, we would emphasize the vital nature of administrative support and encouragement. Certainly attempts to formalize programs are grounded in such support.

Our good beginnings are also probably reflective of the fact that our initial programs contained high appeal components. The program sought to provide direction compatible with the everyday work world of the faculty. We began with where the faculty was, with some everyday concerns.

We have also seen that faculty development can have real

pay-off for individuals and the university. Communications which are inevitably improved and morale which may be boosted are important outcomes. But more tangible outcomes are effected too. The development of new and/or revitalized courses and interdepartmental instruction are some examples.

An important realization was that faculty development entails more than instructional improvement. It must go beyond mere changes in the teaching process and ultimately involve attitudinal and structural changes. It is precisely this fact which necessitates that organized developmental programs also move beyond an ad hoc basis.

Finally we would emphasize that faculty development can be as good as the faculty decides it should be. Tightly organized, funded programs are not always necessary. Organization and funding may expand programming options, but faculty development can proceed from simple ideas and cost nothing.

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APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Faculty Development and Orientation Program Fall 1976

August 23, Monday

9:30 am. University Faculty Meeting, MSC

1:30 pm. Departmental Faculty Meeting in Social Science

3:00 pm. Assistant Instructors will meet with the Committees for the teaching of Sociology 111,112 and 161.

August 24, Tuesday in Social Science 209

9:00 am. Utilization of Behavioral Objectives in Teaching (Dr. Mary Preas)

10:30 am Problems in Student Evaluation:Grades and Things (Dr. Billy Webb)

12:00 noon Lunch at E.T. Cafeteria

1:30 pm. Communicating with Students (Dr. Hal Theis)

3:00 pm. Utilization of Educational Media and Technology (Dr. Earle Williams)

Augest 25, Wednesday in Journalism 110

9:00 am. Utilization of Simulation Games (Mr. J. McDowell

11:00 am. Preparing Lectures for Fun and Profit (Dr. Lawrence Clinton)

12:00 noon Lunch

1:00 Assistant Instructors meet with respective committees.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15

Breakfast 7:30-8:30 am.

SESSION VI

A. Discussion Groups continued (different members) 8:30-9:45 am.

1. Team Teaching--Steve Ball
2. Reflections on Teaching--Paul Barrus
3. Evaluation of Students--Richard Fulkerson
4. Simulation in Teaching--Earle Williams

B. Completion of Evaluation Questionnaires 9:45-10:00 am Billy Bagwell

Break 10:00-10:15 am.

SESSION VII 10:15-12:00 noon

A. Participant Observer--External Evaluation Bill Ewens
B. Recap of Questionnaire--Future Plans Glenn Fournet and Billy Bagwell

Lunch 12:00-1:00 pm.

Check out and depart for Commerce 1:00 pm.

APPENDIX C

PROGRAM FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT SEMINARS
January 10,1977

9:30 am. Coffee and doughnuts-- American Ballroom
10:00 am. Introduction to Program-- American Ballroom
10:15 am. Seminars in respective locations by choice

SEMINAR		CHAIRPERSONS	LOCATION
1.	Personal Time Management	Trezzie Pressley	Bluebonnet
2.	Computer Assisted Instruction	Carol Luce	American
3.	Student Learning Styles	Dick White	Mockingbird
4.	Leading Class Discussion	Judy Geer D. Ohanesian	Velasco
5.	Evaluation of Students/Grading	John Godbold	Caddo
6.	Use of Audio-Visual Materials	Earle Williams	Trinity W.
7.	Developmental Skills Lab(writing)	Lil Brannon Janet Harris	Pecan
8.	Grantsmanship	Ken Ashley	LaSalle
9.	Improving Committee Effectiveness	Robert Noe	DeVaca
10.	Budgetary Processes:Funding ETSU	Bobby Aikin Charles Morrow	Alamo
11.	Working with Minority Students	Dave Talbot J. Reynolds	Trinity E.
12.	Being Assertive with Students	Steve Ball	Friendship
13.	How to Stay out of Court	Attorney General's Office	Rio Grande
14.	Tenure,Promotion, and Merit	Charles Brice Bob Binder	San Jacinto
15.	Student Evaluation of Courses	Mike Mahoney	Goliad